

Trails Working Group (TWG) Meeting Notes

April 13, 2017

Rudyard Township Hall 5:30 p.m.

The following groups were represented;

- ORV
- Overshow vehicles
- Motorcycle
- Hiking
- Cross Country Skiing
- Equestrian
- Water Trails
- Mushers

Forest Service gave a presentation on FACA (Federal Advisory Committee Act) versus Collaboration.

- The primary points of the presentation were that the TWG is NOT a Federal Advisory Committee
- Meetings will continue to be open to the public and will include an open forum
- The Forest Service is not wanting or needing a comprehensive product from the working group; rather, the Forest Service is looking for public input on potential improvements to the Forest Trails System that may be included in the Comprehensive Trails Plan. Development of the working group was encouraged to help facilitate input from each trail activity group.
- The power point slides and presentation will be posted to the TWG website

Group Round Table Discussion

- There are large maps available for groups to utilize for planning their proposals. The large maps show the trail systems and most of the roads. Maps are also available on the Forest Service website.
- There was a question regarding whether things will get done this time since several of the groups have approached the Forest Service in the past with proposals to no avail.
 - The Forest Service representatives said this has been elevated as one of the Forests priorities and there is more assurance and backing than ever before.
- There was a question regarding what are the parameters and limitations of the Forest Service. Trail user groups want to know the sideboards in order to develop viable proposals.
 - The Forest Service will provide the working groups with documentation on how the Forest Service defines and manages trails and roads.
 - The Forest Service will also provide documentation on current trail mileage and limits identified in the Forest Plan; however, the group was informed that the Forest Service is considering a potential amendment to the Forest Plan and that these limits may change.
 - Budget and staffing constraints may also limit the scope of projects that the Forest can sustainably implement and maintain, however these sideboards are hard to quantify since funding and staffing levels change annually. The group was encouraged to be

reasonable with this proposals, include additional partnership opportunities when appropriate, and consider closing underutilized trail to offset new development.

- There was general discussion on the importance of being comprehensive when developing proposals. Initially, all ideas should be discussed and considered.
- Discussion on the difficulty of contacting musher groups in the area. The Forest Service will help with obtaining a list of musher folks, names from Forest Service contact lists.
- SORVA group commented on how there are no designated ORV trails on the East Zone of the Hiawatha. If there were trails, the forest and the SORVA could tap into DNR grants.
- SORVA also commented the DNR is proposing designating trails on Forest Service land. SORVA wanted to know if the DNR proposed trails layer could be shown on the maps the Forest Service has created. That way it will show connectivity and help better plan their proposal. The Forest Service will work to get the layer from the state on the Forest Service map.
- The EUPPC is proposing a Lake Superior water trail. They are creating signs for landings and camping areas along with brochures. The EUPPC was encouraged to begin coordination with the Forest Service on any potential signage that would occur on Forest property to ensure that EUPPC signage meets Forest Service standards.
- There was discussion on the accuracy of the data on the Forest Service maps. The groups would like more detail, especially on the roads layer.

Scheduling of future meetings

- The general consensus of the group was Trout Lake is a better location to meet. Future meetings will be held at the hall in Trout Lake.
- The general consensus of the group was having meetings every two months on Thursday evenings would work best.
- A doodle poll will be sent by the Forest Service to determine the next meeting date.

Wrap up and agenda for June's meeting

- For the meeting in June, two of the nine groups will present their proposals
 - Water Trails
 - SORVA

Link to the Trails Working Group website:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/hiawatha/workingtogether/?cid=FSEPRD533385>